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HIGH CHURCH DOCTRINES

TESTED BY

THE SCRIPTURES

M^c KERROW

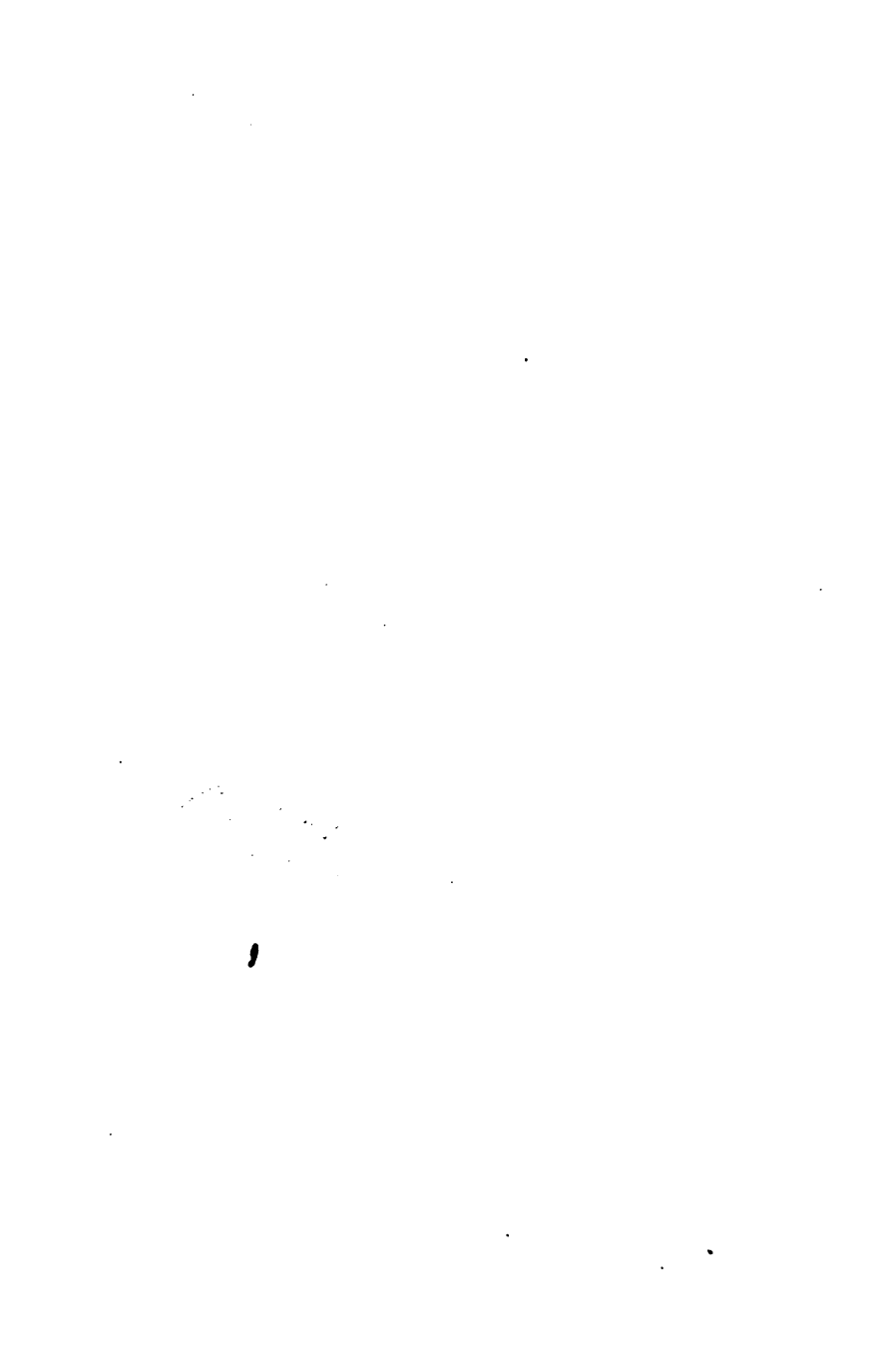




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FOUR LECTURES

DELIVERED IN

CAMP HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.
BIRMINGHAM.

BY

J. M. M^cKERROW, B.A.

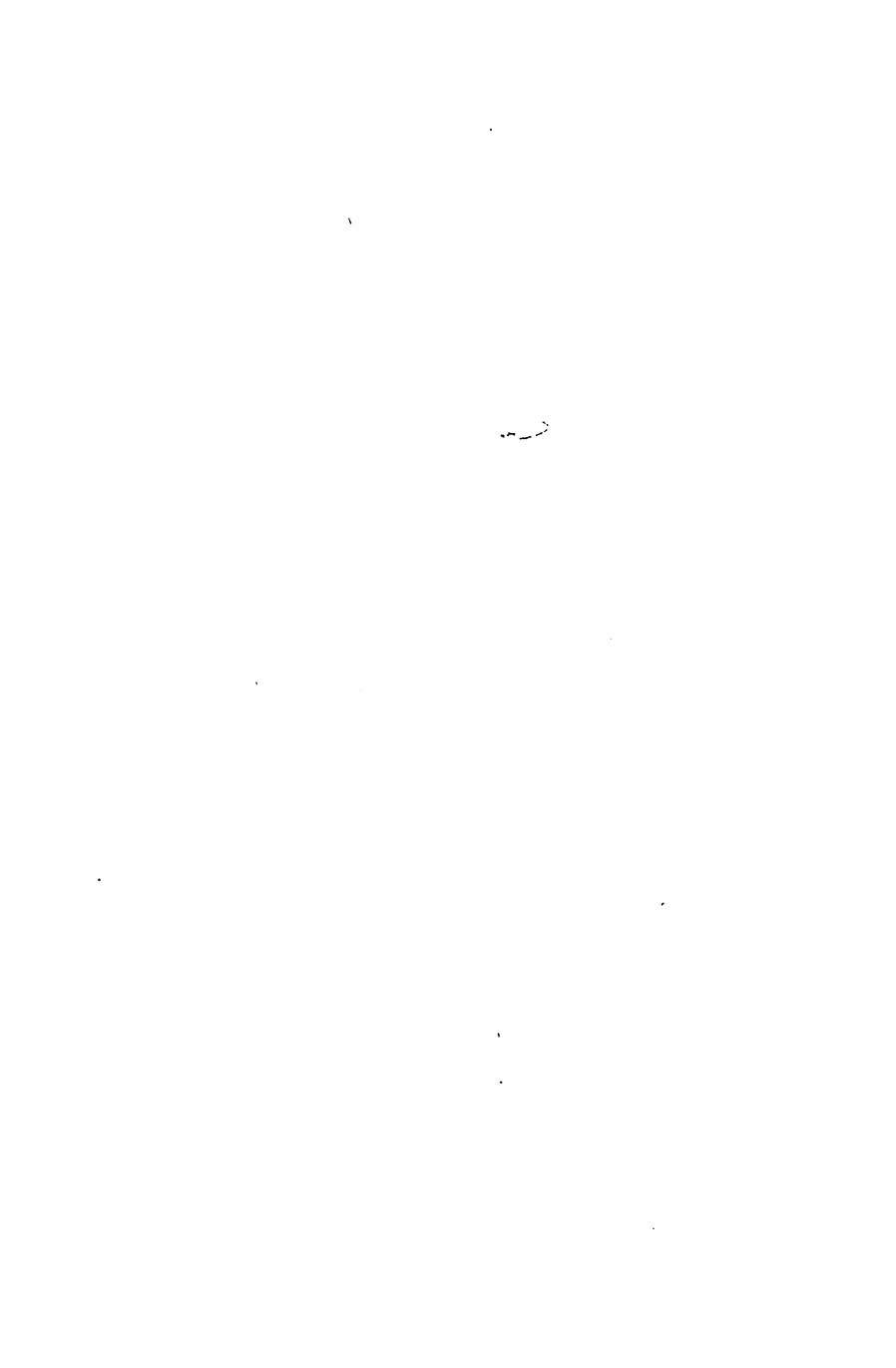


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PREFACE.

WHEN the following Lectures were prepared, and delivered, it was with no intention that they should afterwards be printed. The request to allow them to be published, having come spontaneously from those who heard them spoken, I have complied with it, in the hope that these Addresses may reach some persons who have no opportunity of reading larger and more complete works on the subject of which they treat. I do not pretend to have discovered any new arguments against High Church Doctrines. While claiming to have stated matters in my own way, and enforced them in my own language, I frankly acknowledge my indebtedness to others, and especially to Dr. Enoch Mellor, whose two works on "Ritualism and its Related

Dogmas," and "Priesthood in the Light of the New Testament" completely demolish everything entitled to be called argument on behalf of Ritualistic doctrine.

J. M. M^cK.

BIRMINGHAM, *December* 1877.

HIGH CHURCH DOCTRINES TESTED BY THE SCRIPTURES.

I.

THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

IN the formula used at the ordination of ministers in the Presbyterian Church of England the first question is, "Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and duty?" and to this question an affirmative answer is, of course, expected. Insisting as we do, not simply that the Bible is a rule of faith, but that the Bible is the only rule of faith, we judge all religious opinions by the Bible, and decline all controversy about creeds, except on the basis of what the Holy Scriptures teach. If it can be proved that certain doctrines are scriptural, their proper authority is established, and everything in their favour from other sources is superfluous so

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far as respects the question, Ought they to be believed? If it can be proved that certain doctrines are unscriptural, it is shown that they are destitute of true authority, and that all persons who believe them are in error, no matter whether they plead the authority of the Pope, or of the fathers of the Church, or of tradition.

These statements will explain my reason for giving to the short course of lectures which I have announced, the title they bear. If High Church doctrines cannot stand the test of Scripture they are utterly without rational claim to be believed, and, therefore, in considering them in these lectures, I intend to consider them only in the light of the Word of God. It is no part of my plan to discuss the question whether the Prayer Book sanctions High Church doctrines, for the Prayer Book itself must be tested by the Bible, and its claim to be accepted is not valid unless its doctrines are the doctrines of God's Word. To have been sanctioned by Act of Parliament is not to have received legitimate authority over human minds; we are bound to believe the Word of God, but we are not bound to believe any human compilation of articles of religion, or of prayers, except in so far as they agree with the Word of God.

I have to deal to-night with the doctrine concern-

ing the Christian Ministry, and my object will be to show that the Bible gives no sanction to those pretentious and arrogant claims which High Churchmen make on behalf of this order or office. These claims are of such a nature that they affect not only the functions but also the range of the Christian Ministry, narrowing the latter by the very process of heightening the former, and excluding from all right to be designated ministers of Christ those who have not the ecclesiastical pedigree which certain others are so fully persuaded in their own minds they possess. It is no grievance to me if my neighbour denies the validity of my ordination, and considers me a layman; for ordination confers no grace either upon him or me, and the word layman sounds as well as the word clergyman. But if my neighbour teaches people that he is invested with a solemn and awful power, which, in reality, God never invested any man with since the world began, and if such teaching deludes the minds and injures the souls of those who hear it, and the more it spreads works the more mischief, that, to me, is a grievance, and I must endeavour, by delivering a scriptural message myself and by pointing out his errors, to counteract, if possible, the harm that is being done.

Now the foundation-doctrine of what is called

Ritualism is the radically false and mischievous doctrine that the Christian Ministry is a priesthood. It is believed that Jesus Christ has appointed in His Church an order of men who are mediators between God and their fellowmen; who, being endowed at their ordination with sacerdotal functions, are able to offer sacrifice for others; and are in their own persons channels through which grace flows to those on whose behalf they exercise their divinely conferred functions. This is a perfectly truthful and correct representation of the Christian Ministry as conceived of by the High Church party in the Church of England. In a work on the Christian Priesthood by Dr. Hickes, these words occur: "Are not Christian Bishops and Priests taken or separated from men, as Aaron and his sons were, to minister unto the Lord in the priestly office? Do they not stand in the presence of God to perform mystical as well as moral offices, and minister in His holy worship for the benefit of the people, and serve before Him, especially at the altar, to make reconciliation for their sins? Are they not mediators, intercessors, or procurators betwixt God and man, and as such, transact and minister in sacred matters between them? Are they not representatives of both parties, and placed *by the nature* of their office on the frontier of

intercourse, or in the middle line of communication between them ?” The design of the treatise is to vindicate these claims. In a small book entitled “The Treasury of Devotion,” and stated to be “compiled by a priest,” I find among the “Devotions for Holy Communion” the following prayer for the priest :—“The Lord be in thy heart and on thy lips, and make thee a worthy minister at His altar: the Lord be merciful to thee and forgive thee all thy sins, and bring thee to everlasting life; the Lord accept this Holy Sacrifice at thy hands, to His greater glory and for our necessities: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.” It is not necessary to multiply extracts from the writings of High Churchmen, as these two will show with sufficient clearness both what their ministers are supposed to be, and what they are supposed to do. The theory is that they are sacrificing priests, and not merely ministers of the Word: they are not simply ambassadors for Christ, in Christ’s stead beseeching their fellowmen to be reconciled to God, but they are the representatives of the people in things pertaining to God, and possess extraordinary official powers, which infuse virtue into their ministerial acts.

Now when we examine these claims and pretensions by the light of the New Testament, we

find that they are utterly unwarrantable and false; that there is not the shadow of a foundation for them; and that they are dishonouring to Christ. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." The desire of sinful man for reconciliation with God is met by Christ Himself, and by Christ alone. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

There were priests under the Jewish economy, who offered gifts and sacrifices for sins; but the New Testament explains that these priests and their sacrifices were types and shadows of the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, who appeared to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and it expressly declares that there was no actual cleansing of human guilt by the blood of bulls and of goats, and that there was no sinlessness in the priests of the Jewish dispensation, but that imperfection and transitoriness characterized both the priests and the sacrifices, and that they pointed forward to Him who was at the same time both Priest and Sacrifice, and whose blood cleanseth us from all sin. It is useless, therefore, to go to the Old Testament for arguments on behalf of a Christian priesthood *distinct from the priesthood of Christ*, and that

priesthood of all believers in Christ to which the Apostle Peter refers when he says, "Ye are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." It is as clear as noonday that Judaism was never intended to coexist with Christianity, and that the whole Jewish ritual is abolished now that Christ has been manifested in the flesh, and has suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring men unto God.

Now let us examine what the New Testament has to say about priests, and ascertain whether it gives any sanction to those claims and assumptions which are made by High Churchmen. First, as to the meaning of the word priest. Milton, in one of his shorter poems, says, (not with the design of giving the etymology of the word, but with the view of denouncing those whom he calls "the new forcers of conscience under the Long Parliament") :

"New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large."

It is contended by many that this is etymologically true, whether true in another sense or false. Priest and presbyter are said to be the same, the former word being a contraction of the latter. This is the common opinion of the evangelical Episcopalians, who, though acknowledging a priesthood, do not attach to it any sacerdotal power or function. A priest, in the sense of a presbyter, is not a sacrificing

priest, but only a clergyman of a higher grade than the deacon, and those who are ordained deacons are afterwards ordained priests. But as priests they have no divine gift which they did not possess before. Now whether the word priest is a contraction of the word presbyter or not, a priest in the High Church sense is never identified in the New Testament with a presbyter or elder. Whenever the priests of the Jewish dispensation are mentioned in the New Testament, they are designated by a Greek word (*ιερείς*) which means priests who perform sacrificial rites; but that word is never once applied to any minister or functionary of the Christian Church, nor does any word which is applied to a Christian office-bearer contain the sacrificial meaning or idea which is in the other word. This shows that the New Testament writers perceived a wide difference between a sacrificing priest and a Christian minister. When the Apostle Paul declares "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;" he neither states, hints, nor implies that under any of these designations sacrificial rites were performed, and the references in other passages of the New Testament to the same Christian officers, exclude as

effectually the idea that any of them were, or could be, sacrificing priests. It may be said, however, Let it be admitted that none of these orders are designated priests, still the word priest is found in the New Testament in the sense of one who offers sacrifice; may there not have been an order of sacrificing priests as well? Such a suggestion would be singularly destitute of propriety if made by a believer in apostolical succession, though it might come with somewhat better grace from a person who rejects that figment. The apostles themselves are in the list for whom no sacrificial function is claimed in the New Testament, and an order of Christian priests not descended from the apostles would be perfectly shocking to the mind of a High Churchman. Well, in reference to the actual occurrence of the words priest and priesthood in the New Testament, they refer in every case either to the priests of the Old Testament or to Jesus Christ. As I have mentioned already, there is a spiritual priesthood, that is, a priesthood of all believers in Christ. But I now refer to those instances in which the sacrificing priest is not one who offers spiritual sacrifice; and if every instance is separately examined, it will be found that either the Jewish priests, whose function had been abolished, or Jesus Christ, who, after He had offered one sacrifice for

sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God, are denoted. There are not very many passages in the New Testament in which the word priest occurs, but they are principally in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and it is an easy exercise to discover them, and ascertain to whom they refer. It will be found, as the result of such examination, that in not a single instance is the word employed to designate the ministers of Christ. "Is it not," says Dr. Enoch Mellor, "a significant circumstance that in the Old Testament we meet with the priest everywhere—the name and the thing—the priest who offers sacrifice, and burns incense, and makes intercession; and that when we cross the threshold of the New Testament, the name is never once employed in connection with the office and function of any minister of Christ, whether apostle, evangelist, pastor, teacher, or deacon? Can this be a thing of chance?"

No, brethren, it is not a thing of chance, but a thing which is designed by the Divine Master to show that the function of His servants is to proclaim to the world His atoning and all-sufficient sacrifice, and to invite and entreat their fellow-creatures to believe in Him who, in dying upon the cross, put an end to all that typified that death, and *established a new and higher order of things on the*

ruins of the ritual of the ancient dispensation. It is not a thing of chance, but a thing which ought to teach us that the spiritual priesthood of believers is the only earthly priesthood of the Christian Church, although we have a Great High Priest who is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God,—a Priest made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. As for the Christian ministry, some members of which class so mistakenly and presumptuously call themselves priests, and profess to offer sacrifice, and to act as mediators between God and men, their duty is defined in those words which Jesus addressed to His disciples after His resurrection, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” As He gave to those disciples the command, so He gave to them the qualification, to perform this work of evangelization. But He neither commanded nor qualified them to perform the rites of sacrifice. As we trace their career, and mark the character of their labours, as recorded in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, we see that the preaching of the gospel of salvation occupied their thoughts, engrossed their time, monopolized their energy. They may have baptized those whom they had been instrumental in converting, but we find Paul even saying, “Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel,” and in the

pastoral epistles, in which he instructs his younger brethren, Timothy and Titus, in the duties and qualifications of a bishop or presbyter, we find no sacerdotal powers or functions ascribed either to himself or to them, but only rules of life for governors of the Church and ministers of the Word. He never uses the word "celebrant," or the word "priest," or the word "sacrifice," and never employs language expressive of mediatorship, when he describes the functions of a Christian minister, but he says to Timothy, "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine," and he points out to Titus that a bishop must have certain features of character in order to be properly qualified for office, and his description of what a bishop ought to be, culminates in this sentence, which shows what the duties of that office are for which such character is needed, "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." It is true that preaching is not entirely neglected by High Church clergymen, but they attach little importance to it in comparison with those sacrificial rites, as they imagine them to be, which they perform. The preaching, moreover, is frequently *nothing but a vindication of ritualistic practices, in-*

stead of being the proclamation of the Gospel, after the manner in which it was declared by those whom of old the Lord sent forth, and who daily in the temple, and in every house, ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ. I have here an interesting and well-written description of the morning service held last Easter Sunday at St. Alban's, London, and this is what the writer says about the sermon:—

“The sermon was extempore, and delivered with much gesticulation. It was entirely rhetorical, but very short—the Ritualistic clergy, for obvious reasons, not caring much about the sermon, but rather about the magical rites which remove them from their hearers. The sermon puts the priest upon common earth. He must give his opinions, which may be criticised, and he must display his weakness. The text was, ‘Come, see the place where the Lord lay,’ and the preacher mainly strove to force contemplation of the tomb and the resurrection. But he also founded upon the text an argument for the doctrine of the Real Presence, and it was so extraordinary, that I am afraid my readers will think when they hear it that I am bamboozling them. I will not, however, exaggerate what he said one tittle. We were asked, he said, to look at the place where *the Lord* lay; not where the body of the Lord lay. But when the Lord was placed in the tomb He was dead. The Scripture, therefore, called the body of the Lord the Lord, and, therefore, where the body is the Lord is. ‘Therefore,’ cried the preacher, ‘when this body is upon the altar the Lord is there.’ It would be absurd seriously to discuss such teaching. I leave it, merely reiterating that just as I have presented it was it presented to a large assembly of educated persons in the year 1876, who apparently swallowed it without wincing.” *

Now if any one believes that such preaching is

* *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 22, 1876.

anything else than a mockery and caricature of Christianity, if any one is incapable of seeing that such interpretation of Scripture is utterly nonsensical, he had better be left alone; it would be a waste of time to endeavour to make him see it. But even though the preaching should be of a different character, still a fact has to be considered which cannot be expressed better than Dr. Mellor has stated it in these words: "The office of a priest and that of a minister are in polar opposition to each other. They need not have anything in common. In so far as a man is a sacrificing priest, he is not a preacher of the gospel, and in so far as he is a preacher of the gospel, he is not a priest." I have shown that no such order of men as priests existed in the early Christian Church, or has any authority from Jesus Christ, and, therefore, those who now claim the name and power and functions of priests, are not recognised as priests by the Divine Head of the Church, and have no such power or prerogative as they claim to exercise. But that claim is the root of incalculable evil both to the persons who make it and the persons whom it deceives, and those who desire no greater honour than they possess in being ministers of Christ, and who arrogate to themselves no sacerdotal power, but *confess that they are only instruments in the Lord's*

hand for the conversion of sinners and the edifying of the body of Christ, protest, in the name of that blessed Master whose glory alone they seek, against all priestly assumption, and denounce it as one of the most fruitful sources of false confidence and spiritual delusion.

There is another branch of the doctrine concerning the Christian Ministry which demands consideration, and that is the subject of Apostolical Succession. Even among the evangelical clergy of the Church of England there are some who stand by this doctrine, and who give themselves airs of fancied superiority to other ministers on account of it. But High Churchmen, without exception, believe in the impossible thing called Apostolical Succession, and attach to it a virtue and a significance which cannot be exaggerated. What the idea precisely is may be understood by means of the following quotation from the first of the famous series of papers called *Tracts for the Times*:—"We have been born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God. The Lord Jesus Christ gave His Spirit to his apostles; they in turn laid their hands on those who should succeed them; and those again on others; and so the sacred gift has been handed down to our present bishops who

have appointed us as their assistants and in some sort representatives." The author proceeds to show that the words of the Ordination Service, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands: whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained: and be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God and of His holy sacraments, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen," are evidence of apostolical succession, because the bishop could not give what he had never received; the extraordinary gifts which he bestows upon others have been bestowed upon himself. "It is plain then," says the writer, "that he but *transmits*, and that the Christian Ministry is a succession. And if we trace back the power of ordination from hand to hand, of course we shall come to the apostles at last." These extracts I have given merely to show what those who believe in apostolical succession mean by it. Let us now see whether it has any foundation in Scripture. With the inconsistency between the language of the Ordination Service and the language of Article xxiii. I shall not, for the reason already assigned, concern myself; those who use the Book of Common Prayer are principally interested in harmonizing its

discrepancies. But where is the doctrine of apostolical succession taught in the New Testament? We are referred to John xx., 21, 22. "Then Jesus said to them again, Peace be unto you, as my Father has sent me even so send I you. And when He had said this He breathed on them, and saith unto them Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained." I have seen it stated that High Churchmen discover in this passage no fewer than four of their peculiar doctrines, viz., the Real Presence, Confession, Absolution, and Apostolical Succession. How dull, therefore, must we be, not to be able to discover one of them! What foundation for apostolical succession can there be in an act of Christ which concerned His immediate followers alone, and was not accompanied by any declaration that the gift which He bestowed upon them they were to transmit, and those to whom they transmitted it were to be enabled to transmit it to others, and so on, till the end of the Christian dispensation? Christ did not give the slightest hint to His disciples that in these words He was instituting an "Order" that was never to lose sight of its relation to those whom he personally addressed, and was never to lose possession of a peculiar grace which they now received. Is it to be supposed,

moreover, that an occasion when one of the apostles was absent, and did not feel the breath nor hear the words of Jesus, could be intended to give authority to a doctrine of apostolical succession? Surely nothing meant to be associated, and so closely and solemnly associated, in succeeding ages with "the glorious company of the apostles" would have taken its rise when even a single member of that small company was out of the way; yet it is written, "but Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came," and it is not recorded that when, after eight days, "again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them," he received for transmission in his line that power which some suppose the others had previously received for transmission in theirs. There is no instance in the New Testament of the apostles either breathing on others, as Christ had breathed on them, or addressing to others the words "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," which Christ had addressed to them. No record of the words and deeds of the apostles affords any particle of evidence that they used as a formula of ordination those words of Jesus Christ which the bishops of the Church of England pronounce in the Ordination Service. The instances in which the Holy Ghost was given through the agency of the *apostles* were very special in their character, and the

fact that the Holy Ghost had been received was invariably and immediately testified by special and miraculous effects. But the Ordination Service is never followed by such effects, and there is neither token nor reason to believe, that the authoritative declaration "Receive the Holy Ghost," is actually followed by the reception of the Holy Ghost. The most liberal and ingenuous men have no belief whatever in the theory that this passage of Scripture teaches apostolical succession. Dean Alford says, that so far as the gift of the Spirit is in the ministers of Christ it is from Christ Himself, and (to quote the Dean's own language) "not by successive delegation from the apostles, of which fiction I find in the New Testament no trace."

The final commission of our Lord to his apostles, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo ! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," is also cited in favour of apostolical succession; the argument being, that since the apostles would necessarily die before the purpose contemplated in the terms of that Divine commission was accomplished, they would have to appoint successors, and these would have to appoint

other successors, and so on until the work is finished. Now, while it is true that the Church of Christ has always found men to take up that Christian work from which others have been separated by death, so that there has been a constant succession of religious teachers ever since the command was spoken, "Go ye and teach all nations," and will be until all nations are taught; it is assumed by the advocates of the doctrine of apostolical succession, that the true succession is in the form of a continuous line of diocesan bishops, and that along that line descend peculiar gifts, so that it is not every preacher of the Gospel who is a successor of the apostles, but only those who have been episcopally ordained, and have received the grace which such ordination confers. This view, of course, implies that there has always been diocesan episcopacy since the beginning of the Christian era, which is not true. A bishop, in the New Testament application of the word, was an ordinary presbyter or elder; he was not invested with any higher rank, or endowed with any different powers and functions. It is agreed by all competent judges that, with the exception of the apostles themselves, there was no functionary in apostolic times of superior dignity to the presbyter, and that the three supposed orders of bishops, presbyters,

and deacons, resolve themselves into two, the one holding a spiritual, and the other a temporal office.

I have already hinted that those who believe in apostolical succession, believe in an impossibility. The apostles, from the nature of the case, could have no successors, except in that sense which regards every person as a successor of the apostles who holds the faith which they held, and to the best of his ability proclaims, as they did, the Gospel of salvation. But this theory of succeeding the apostles excludes the very thing for the sake of which High Churchmen contend for the doctrine of apostolical succession. Nothing will satisfy them but an unbroken order of bishops, stretching back to the apostles, and every individual bishop possessing the power of bestowing the Holy Ghost on those whom he ordains, so that this theory of theirs is quite in harmony with that theory of priesthood which has already been considered, and we should expect those who believe the one also to believe the other.

Now the apostles were a company of men who had a definite work assigned them, for which they received definite qualifications, and who could have no successors, because the necessary qualifications of an apostle were incapable of transmission. The apostles all received their commission from the

living lips of Christ; it was essential that they should have seen the Lord after He rose again, so that they might be qualified to attest the truth of His resurrection; they enjoyed a special inspiration; they had the power of working miracles; and they had various other "signs of an apostle" which they constantly exhibited before the world as their credentials. That which they were as apostles, others who lived after them could not possibly be, a proof that their office was not meant to be perpetuated; and they have not given a hint in their writings that they were to have any official successors when they died, to whom should flow divine grace through them, and from whom in like manner divine grace should flow to others.

The two passages of Scripture which I have briefly reviewed are those on which the greatest stress is usually laid in this controversy; but High Churchmen also appeal to others, and with as little success as they appeal to those portions of the New Testament to which attention has now been called. You will not expect me to state and answer all their arguments within the limits of a lecture; and therefore, having brought forward the grounds on which they mainly rest their view of the Christian ministry, or rather that interpretation of Scripture *by which they mainly defend their presumptuous*

theory concerning themselves, I shall leave other points unnoticed.

It is very pitiable to find within the Christian Church claims which are at the same time so false and so arrogant; but as we turn away from them, wondering that human minds should ever be so strangely constituted as to seek in God's Word a warrant for views and practices that are dishonouring to God, let us utter afresh our thankfulness to "the Priest upon His throne," who on earth offered Himself once for all a sacrifice for sins, and has given us boldness to enter into the holiest by a new and living way. The desire for some one to act as a mediator between him and God is natural to the sinner whose eyes have been opened to the reality of sin, who feels that he is under condemnation, and who longs to have it removed, and to be enabled to stand in a right relation towards that God whom he has offended, and not only to have his iniquity forgiven, but also to be spiritually cleansed. The old cry, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God?" is the cry of many now, and always, who are conscious that, stained with sin as they are, they cannot approach the infinitely Holy One except through mediation; and the only mediation that can possibly avail is that of the Man Christ Jesus. A mediator who is

himself a sinner is no true mediator at all; but "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." All self-styled priests, pretending to stand between God and their fellow-men, are supplanters of the one real Mediator, obstructives to the attainment of the blessing which they profess to be the medium of conferring, and should be commanded to stand out of the way of man's approach to God. We repudiate their claims, and we disdain their offices. The sacrifice that was offered once for all upon the cross of Calvary is sufficient for the worst of men, and indispensable for the best; and the gift of the Holy Ghost is bestowed through Him alone who gave Himself a ransom for all, and who Himself said, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Let us yield ourselves up to Him, who, for our benefit, and for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame. He is willing to save the chief of sinners, and to save him now. Will you not come, O sinner, as you are, and accept Him as He is? And then you can lend your voice to swell the song, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own *blood*, and hath made us kings and priests unto

God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." That is the song of apostolic succession; the song of the priests whose consecration is their faith, and whose sacrifices are praise and prayer. It is the privilege of those to sing it who follow the apostles as they followed Christ. That which Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ;" and again to the Philippians, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example," indicates the only line of apostolic succession, and in this spiritual line we may all be their successors. May their faith and earnestness be found in us in larger measure as the years roll on, and may a blessedness resembling theirs be our everlasting portion!

II.

THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING BAPTISM.

THE object I have in view to-night is to bring to the test of God's Word that doctrine concerning baptism which is held by the High Church party in the Church of England, not to consider the much agitated but always unsettled question, what the proper teaching really is of the Church of England, as embodied in the Baptismal Service, the Catechism, and the twenty-seventh Article. Mr. Binney mentions, in his "Handbook on Ritualism," four different interpretations of the teaching of the Prayer-book regarding the sacrament of baptism, these being that of the old Broad Church, of the new Broad Church, of the Low Church, and of the High Church; and as these interpretations are contradictory of one another, and cannot, by any process known to the human mind, be made to agree, the question, What does the Church of

England teach on the subject of baptism? is a question which will never be answered to the satisfaction of all parties, and will give rise to controversy and contention as long as the answer to that question has for anybody any interest. I have taken in hand an easier task than attempting to decide which of the contending parties has the best of the argument in the interpretation of the Prayer Book, viz.—the task of showing that one of the parties, at all events, is not only unsupported, but condemned by that Sacred Book which is the supreme authority on matters of religious doctrine. There is no difficulty in ascertaining what High Churchmen believe concerning the sacrament of baptism, and there is no difficulty in proving that, with whatever other book their doctrine may agree or disagree, it is not the doctrine of the New Testament. The idea which they cherish that their clergy are sacrificing priests, is not more anti-scriptural than the figment of baptismal regeneration.

In order to avoid every appearance of misrepresentation of the High Church position as respects the subject of baptism, I shall not describe it in my own words. Dr. Pusey and other High Church writers shall state the doctrine. The tract which bears the title "Scriptural Views of Holy Baptism," and which is No. 67 of Tracts for the

Times, was written by Dr. Pusey, and is universally regarded as the ablest statement of the High Church doctrine concerning baptism which has appeared. In that tract it is declared that baptism is "to the infant, the remission of original guilt; to the adult, of his actual sins also; to both, by their being made members of Christ, and thereby partakers of His wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Herein we are justified, accounted and made righteous, freed from past sin, whether original or actual, have a new principle of life imparted to us, and the hope of the resurrection and of immortality." Again, in the same tract it is affirmed that "regeneration is the gift of God bestowed by Him in this life, in baptism only," and, once more, as to the nature as well as the source of the new birth, it is asserted that "no change of heart or of the affections, no repentance however radical, no faith, no life, no love, come up to the idea of this 'birth from above,'—it takes them all in, and comprehends them all, but it is more than all; it is not only the motion of a new heart, new affections, new desires, and *as it were* a new birth, but it is an *actual* birth from above or from God, a gift coming down from God and given to faith through baptism,—yet not the work *of* faith, but the operation of 'water and the Holy Spirit,'—the Holy

Spirit giving us a new life in the fountain opened by Him, and our being born therein *of* Him, even as our blessed and incarnate Lord was, according to the flesh, born *of* Him in the virgin's womb." In harmony with these ideas of Dr. Pusey, is that which is taught concerning "Holy Baptism" in the Plain Guide, a small book of instructions in doctrine and ritual, by the Rev. J. S. Pollock, M.A., of Birmingham. It is written in a simple and popular style, and contains such information as the following,—“By Holy Baptism we are washed from the sin of our birth, and born again of water and of the Spirit.” “All baptized persons are Christians, though they are not all good Christians. But no unbaptized persons are Christians, though they may be trying to do what is good. All baptized persons are children of God, though they are not all obedient children. But no unbaptized persons are children of God, though they may do somethings that God's children do. This seems quite plain. We cannot make ourselves God's people. This must be God's act, and He has taught us that He does it in Holy Baptism.” As these passages exhibit with a clearness that will satisfy every mind, what is intended by High Churchmen when they teach or avow the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and as no High Churchman, if appealed to, would question

the fitness of the writers to be regarded as representatives of his party, we may dispense with further quotations explanatory of the doctrine believed. It amounts to making salvation dependent upon baptism, for if regeneration is necessary to salvation, and there is no regeneration except by baptism, then there is no salvation without baptism ; unless, perchance, there should be some method which God has not revealed to mankind.

Now it is not necessary to view this extraordinary theory concerning baptism in its relation to those equally extraordinary assumptions concerning the Anglican clergy which were shown in the former lecture to be the very essence of High Church doctrine. If only the lineal descendants of the apostles are true ministers of Christ, and if only a true minister of Christ may administer the sacraments, it follows that baptism by those whose ordination is repudiated must also be repudiated, and therefore that not only those who have never been baptized by any person, but also those who have apparently, but not really, been baptized, are unregenerated, and consequently unsaved. Mr. Pollock declares that no unbaptized persons are Christians, but it does not appear whether he would allow such baptism as we administer here to be true and saving baptism. We, of course, do not pretend

that it is saving; still we contend that it is true. It is a fact, however, that the validity of lay baptism is recognized by the law of England, and the clergy of the Established Church are, therefore, obliged to assent to it as legal; and it is also a fact that a deacon of the Church of England can in certain circumstances administer baptism to infants, that is, in the absence of the priest; so that whether one who considers himself a lineal descendant of the apostles, believes in his heart and conscience or not, that lay baptism is real baptism, he is compelled to acquiesce in it as a member of a Church which receives its orders from the State. Mr. Binney, however, says "Although lay baptism has been pronounced valid by the law of England—that is by the law of the *Establishment*—it does not follow that all clergymen will admit it to be the law of the *Church*." And he mentions that a child whom he had baptized was regarded by a clergyman as unbaptized, and was denied the burial service, in accordance with that rubric which forbids Christian burial to persons that have not received baptism. This clergyman, whoever he may have been, disobeyed the law of the land, but refused to do violence to his conscience; thus taking up, though not exactly on the same grounds, the position of Mr. Tooth of Hatcham. As it happened, he escaped without penalty; for the

child who had received nonconformist baptism, also received nonconformist burial.

The High Church party universally believe that baptism, rightly administered, is invariably followed by that spiritual change which is termed the new birth; and it is this article of their creed, and its relation to the New Testament, with which we have at present chiefly to do. For Scriptural argument, they rely on Jesus Christ's words to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" upon the Apostle Paul's words in the Epistle to Titus, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and upon a few more passages; but these two supply them with what they consider direct and adequate proof that baptism regenerates and saves.

Our Saviour's words to Nicodemus certainly relate to a new birth, which, since it is indispensable, must be possible; and the nature of it is more precisely indicated in those earlier words of Jesus, "Except a man be born again (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God." When Nicodemus, who did not understand what Jesus meant, asked, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he

enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered him in those words which are erroneously considered to teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. That they announce the necessity of regeneration is evident; but what evidence is there that such regeneration is by means of baptism? "Water and the Spirit," is the reply. Well, what proof is there that by water is meant baptism? for baptism is not actually named, and throughout the whole discourse to Nicodemus, Jesus does not mention any outward ordinance whatsoever, but speaks of the mysterious operations of the Spirit of God, and of His own lifting up on the cross, and of salvation through faith in Him as the sacrifice for sins. Admitting, on the one hand, that it cannot be shown with absolute certainty that Jesus had not the idea of baptism in His mind, there is, on the other hand, no absolute certainty that he had, and it is not proof but opinion which is advanced by those who see in this passage any allusion to baptism. But even if it be granted that our Lord who did not mention the ordinance of baptism by name yet signified it when he mentioned water, it is well known that in the Scriptures water is often used as a symbol of the Holy Ghost. The agent that cleanses the body is an emblem of the Agent that cleanses the soul. Nicodemus must

have been familiar with the idea of representing in this manner the inward and spiritual by means of the outward and physical, for he must have read in the prophecy of Zechariah, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness;" and in the prophecy of Ezekiel, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you ;" and in the prophecy of Isaiah, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground : I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring ;" and many other Old Testament passages in which the same idea is set forth, of water as the symbol of the Holy Spirit. Now as God did not promise and impart a double affusion, that is, both water and the Spirit, but denoted and explained the inward operation of the one by allusion to the universally known effect of the application of the other, so when Jesus said "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," He mentioned first the symbol and then that of which it is symbolical, and did not teach that the literal application of water, under any circumstances, is connected with the spiritual change which is termed regeneration or the new birth. That

spiritual change is accomplished by the Holy Spirit alone, and may either precede, accompany, or follow baptism; whereas the High Church doctrine is that regeneration is essentially and inseparably connected with baptism, that the ordinance itself conveys it, and is the only channel through which it can come. We maintain that the New Testament teaches no such doctrine, and that although baptism is the symbol of regeneration it is not the instrument of regeneration, and that multitudes of persons have been baptized who have never been regenerated, and multitudes have been regenerated who have never been baptized. In support of this view of the relation which Jesus Christ signified between water and the Spirit, those words may be adduced in which the Spirit's operation is likened to the effect of another material agent, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with *fire*." Evidently, in this case, John the Baptist used the language of symbolism, and by the mention of fire represented the Divine energy—the influence of the Holy Ghost. "Baptism with the Holy Ghost is not one thing and baptism with fire another, but the former is the reality of which the latter is the symbol."* And, in like manner, when water and the Spirit were associated by Jesus Christ in the statement, "Except a

* Dr. Maclaren's Sermons, Second Series, Sermon xiii.

man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," the former is the symbol of which the latter is the reality. Regeneration is the work of the Holy Ghost, and if that which we have declared to be the symbol were the instrument, Jesus would surely not have excluded it in His subsequent references to the new birth, such as, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," and, "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit." If the water of baptism were essential to regeneration, why did not Jesus in each case say "born of water and the Spirit?" If it should be asked, Why did he say it even once, if regeneration were not by baptism ? it is sufficient to reply that it would be of service in instructing Nicodemus, puzzled as he was by our Lord's first mention of the new birth without any statement of its nature and agency, to introduce a figure of speech with which he was familiar, and having once done so it was not needful that Jesus should again mention the symbol when mentioning the reality. Neander remarks, in his "Life of Christ," "We infer from the fact that Christ says nothing more of water, but proceeds to explain the operations of the Spirit, that the former was only

a point of departure to lead to the latter. It was the baptism of the Spirit, the 'birth of the Spirit' into a new Divine life, that was unknown to Nicodemus; whereas John's baptism might have already made him acquainted with water as a symbol of inward purification, pointing to a higher purification of soul to be wrought by the Messiah, and aiding in its comprehension."

The words of scholars and commentators in abundance, might be quoted against the High Church interpretation of that passage, which, to Dr. Pusey and others, seems a direct statement of baptismal regeneration. But I must pass on to consider the meaning of those words of St. Paul, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," &c. It is assumed, in this case as in the others, that baptism is denoted; but the passage contains no mention of baptism, and no allusion to water. We are, therefore, entitled to demand something more than mere assertion that the water of baptism is signified by the apostle in using these words. While Zwingle rejected, Calvin adopted, the theory of a reference to baptism in this passage, but in a sense entirely at variance with the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. He affirmed that the

train of thought is, "God hath saved us by His mercy; the sign and pledge of that salvation we have in baptism; the efficient cause is the renewing of the Holy Ghost which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour." Even if it be granted that the apostle refers to baptism, his words supply no argument on behalf of baptismal regeneration. One clause of the sentence, beyond all doubt or mistake, ascribes "renewal" to the Holy Ghost; and what is that renewal from that source, but a new life into which we are formed by Divine power? and even though another clause should be viewed as referring to baptism, the emblematical explanation would suit this passage, as well as the one previously examined. In any case, the discernment is very wonderful, and by us entirely unattainable, which perceives in these words of the Apostle Paul, a statement of the doctrine that while we are not saved by works of righteousness which we have done, we are saved by that righteous work which some fellow-creature does for us when he applies to us the water of baptism.

I have stated that these two passages—the one in the words of Jesus Christ to Nicodemus, and the other in the words of the Apostle Paul to Titus—are the chief scriptural stronghold of Dr. Pusey and his *party*; but they also appeal to others, such as the

following from the first Epistle of St. Peter, "The like figure whereunto, baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." These words occur in connection with that obscure passage about Christ preaching to the spirits in prison, "which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water." With that salvation by water, of Noah and his family, is compared a salvation by baptism; but that it is not a ceremonial baptism is expressly affirmed by the apostle in the words "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh," that is, not an outward washing with water; and with similar plainness it is declared that it is a spiritual baptism, consisting in "the answer of a good conscience toward God," or, as Alford translates it, "the inquiry of a good conscience after God." As if to guard against that very abuse of baptism into which High Churchmen have fallen, the apostle explains that he does not mean an outward and ceremonial, but an inward and spiritual baptism; and the general meaning of the passage may be summed up in these words from Dr. Mellor's article on Baptismal Regeneration, in the second volume of "Ecclesia:—"

"The apostle is comparing with each other two salvations—one, that of the eight who were preserved in the ark by the power of God amid the waters of the deluge; and another, that of all who are saved by a spiritual baptism which does not consist in the cleansing of the body, but of the soul. As the ark which Noah prepared was the means of saving those whom the Lord shut in, so in the gospel economy, spiritual baptism which renovates the heart is an ark, the true antitype, by which believers are saved from the perils of sin. If the thought of baptism by water were in the mind of the writer at all, it was that he might keep it in its subordinate position as an emblem of that glorious cleansing which purifies the soul."

It may be useful to refer to certain words which occur in Paul's defence of himself as he stood on the stairs of the castle, on the occasion of that great commotion which took place at Jerusalem, and which is described in the twenty-first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. He said, in giving an account of his conversion, that Ananias had come to him in Damascus, and had announced what God designed to do with him, and that then Ananias had said, "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Now that

this appeal of Ananias to Saul did not imply that baptism was the cause of spiritual cleansing, and therefore does not afford an argument for baptismal regeneration, is evident from the circumstance that Saul was converted before he was baptized. In the Epistle to the Galatians, he says that God called him by His grace, and that he revealed His Son in him, but he says not a word about his baptism, because that was both a subsequent and subordinate matter to the spiritual change which had been wrought in him by Divine grace; and when we read the narrative, in the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, of Saul's sudden arrest by the voice from heaven, as he was journeying from Jerusalem to Damascus, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, we perceive that his views and feelings, his heart and conscience, were changed even before the visit of Ananias, so that when, in obedience to the Lord's command, Ananias came to him, he addressed him as one who was already a believer in Christ, and called him "brother Saul." The words of Calvin are worthy of record: "It is God alone who washes us from our sins by the blood of His Son. When we speak of the remission of sins, God is the Author; the only material cause is the blood of Christ; baptism is the symbol. Ananias desired that Paul receiving

the symbol, might the better be assured of the fact."

It is impossible within the limits of this lecture to comment on every passage in which High Churchmen imagine that the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is expressed or implied; but I shall mention one more before drawing to a close. It is this: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Assuming that the last sixteen verses of St. Mark's Gospel are genuine, still, baptismal regeneration finds no support in the words now quoted. In order to prove that they yield support to that doctrine, it must be shown that the faith which is necessary to salvation is produced by baptism, and it must also be shown that not only he that believeth not, but that he that is not baptized shall be damned. But if in the words "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," there is any statement of cause and effect at all, baptism is the effect of belief, not belief the effect of baptism; and in the other clause of the sentence, the condemnation is not said to be the fate of the unbaptized, but only the fate of the unbelieving. Baptism is not mentioned, but purposely excluded.

Now, it is simply impossible to harmonize with *these* words of Jesus Christ, that statement of Dr.

Pusey, that. "Regeneration is the gift of God, bestowed by Him in this life, in baptism only." If regeneration, which is essential to salvation, is bestowed in baptism only, it is inconceivable that our Lord, when telling the conditions under which a person cannot be saved, should have neglected to mention baptism. Man's destruction is declared to be inevitable if he will not by faith accept the Saviour; but neither is baptism said to be the means by which he believes and is saved, nor is the omission of baptism said to be fatal to his regeneration and salvation. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

If the doctrine of baptismal regeneration were true, baptism would occupy a much more prominent place in the New Testament than it does, and the apostles would have said less than they did say about the preaching of the Word, and more about baptism in its relation to salvation. We find many instances in which persons who had believed were baptized, but we do not find one instance in which a person was baptized in order to make him a child of God. Nor do we find in apostolic preaching a single statement or suggestion that those who are destitute of faith in Christ are entitled to receive,

either for themselves or for their children, the privilege of baptism. After Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, "they that gladly received his word were baptized;" after the Lord had opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things spoken by Paul, she was baptized; the Philippian jailor whose anxious cry, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" was answered by the apostles with the advice, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," was baptized—not in order that he might believe, and not before, but after he had believed; and thus faith is constantly shown in the New Testament to be the way of salvation, and a prerequisite to baptism, instead of baptism being, as Dr. Pusey and his followers represent, a saving ordinance. Among those whom the apostles or their associates baptized on a profession of faith, there were some who were either deceived in themselves, or intended to deceive others; but on the theory of baptismal regeneration how could this possibly be? Simon Magus made a profession of faith, and was baptized by Philip the Evangelist, yet in a short time Peter saw in him evidence that his heart was not right in the sight of God, and said to him, "I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." Here was one of Dr. Pusey's *baptized* and regenerated persons rebuked by an

apostle for possessing a wicked heart, and the characteristics of a child of Satan rather than a child of God. Compare the account which is given of the spiritual condition of this baptized person with what is said regarding Cornelius and his "kinsmen and near friends," whom he had called together in order to hear the address of Peter:—"While Peter yet spake these words the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." They did not receive the Holy Ghost in baptism; but because they had received the Holy Ghost they were baptized. What a contrast between these persons upon whom, while as yet they were unbaptized, the Holy Ghost fell, and that baptized person whom an apostle perceived to be in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity! The perverseness which in the face of such facts as are recorded in the New Testament, maintains as the teaching of the New Testament that we are made God's children in "holy baptism," and in no other way, can only be accounted for by peculiarities of mental constitution or ecclesiastical training, which prevent both facts and doctrines from being seen under their natural and proper aspect.

It may be sufficient to add to these considerations that the stress which the apostles laid upon the work of preaching the Gospel, and the ardour with which they devoted themselves to that work as the divinely appointed instrumentality of saving souls, are utterly at variance with High Church views of baptism. Would not the apostles have made baptizing rather than preaching their chief occupation, if they had believed it to be a saving ordinance, and to possess a regenerating virtue? If baptism is all that High Churchmen declare it to be, that which it is now it must have been then, and Paul, who purposely neglected the administration of the ordinance, and spent his time in preaching, was wilfully unfaithful to God, and careless of the salvation of souls. "I thank God," he says to the Corinthians, "that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptised any other." This was all the apostle could say that he had done in that department of Christian work, during the eighteen months he had lived in Corinth. And how strangely he speaks of it!—thanking God he had done so little!—an apostle expressing his thankfulness that he had been the means of imparting to so *few of his fellow-creatures* the transcendent bless-

ings inseparable from baptism, and only to be obtained by means of baptism! What had he been doing all that time? How can he answer for his shameful unfaithfulness to his Master, and his wicked unconcern for the perishing, whom he might so easily have saved? He stands on his defence, and this is what he says,—“Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel.” Because the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, he gave himself to that work of proclaiming the Gospel, and left others to baptize the converts he had made. Would Paul have done that, if baptismal regeneration had been true? Would his conception of the object for which Christ sent him have been what it was, if baptismal regeneration had been true? No; if Paul was right, the Ritualists are wrong. He is not on their side, but in direct antagonism to them. The teaching of the new Testament is thoroughly at variance with all teaching which represents salvation to be in sacraments, or to be obtainable by any other means than faith in Him who died for us and rose again. Baptism is a Christian ordinance, and has its proper function, and must be held in honour. But it is not the means of effecting or conveying regeneration, and to administer it with the view of washing away sin, is simply ruinous to

souls. Where are the signs of its efficacy to change the heart and purify the life in the thousands who have been baptized, and have thereby been made "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven?" Who has ever seen living evidence that he who had been baptized was in consequence, and immediately, born again? Never since the world began has regeneration come to a human being in that way. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, in those who exercise repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." We take our stand on the doctrine that pardon and salvation are obtained through the application of the precious blood of Christ to the sin-stained soul, and through that medium alone. It is all-prevailing, and it is all-sufficient. Away, then, with the monstrous superstition that to be baptized is to be saved! It encourages sin by fostering the idea that the corruption of the heart can be cleansed at any time by a ceremonial act. It perverts the Scriptures, and deadens the conscience, and dishonours the cross of Christ. It has no foundation in the revelation which God has given to man. It is condemned by the entire history of the purpose of Christ's mission, and of the mode in which that mission was fulfilled. We are commanded to rely

on His atonement, and assured that to do so is to be saved. And, therefore, to the unbelieving, whether they have been baptized or not, I say to-night that they stand in jeopardy every hour, and I entreat them, if they would secure their everlasting well-being, to come to the fountain that has been opened for sin and for uncleanness. Come now, O sinner, for Christ is willing to receive you when you are willing to come. Come now, for now is the accepted time and now is the day of salvation. Come now, and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

III.

THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE LORD'S TABLE.

THE scriptural narratives of the institution of that ordinance which was intended to be at the same time a commemoration of Christ's death and a bond of fellowship among His disciples, are so short, that there is probably no other instance of so few words having given rise to so many; and the ordinance itself, as first appointed by Jesus and observed by Himself and His disciples, is so simple, that exaggeration and perversion probably never reached such proportions as they have attained in that which Roman Catholics and Ritualists make of the words and action of our Lord on that night in which He was betrayed. The art of making much of little has been studied by these people with an amount of perseverance and success to which it would be difficult to find a parallel, although a lifetime were spent in the search. If any one had told the *apostles as*, either with their Master, or after His

departure, they ate the bread and drank the wine which He appointed to be received in remembrance of Him, that this simple, though impressive, service would at some future time be transformed into the "tremendous sacrifice" which so-called priests imagine themselves able and authorized to offer, they would, doubtless, have refused to believe that a Christian ordinance could ever become so completely misunderstood, and so thoroughly perverted, not by persons who despised it, but by persons who meant to honour it.

We have to consider to-night, with as much conciseness as possible, the High Church doctrine concerning that Divine Institution which all true believers in Jesus Christ ought to honour by observance; and which, as a memorial of that Death which purchased our salvation, and a seal of the covenant of grace, and a medium of Christian fellowship, and a pledge of Christ's second coming, ought to be regarded by every Christian with feelings of gratitude to Him who ordained it, and satisfaction on account of the blessing that is found in a hearty obedience to His command, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

In this lecture, I shall follow the method hitherto adopted of showing what High Churchmen believe by quoting their own words. As you have had Mr. Pollock's definition or description of "Holy Ban-

tism," hear what he says of the other Sacrament:—

"Holy Communion feeds us with the Most Precious Body and Blood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ."

"Only one of the Services used at Church has God as its Author, and is in this sense Divine. The Divine Service has many names:—

"1. The Sacrament of the Altar; because of the *place* where It is celebrated. Heb. xiii. 10.

"2. The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; because of the *Presence* of our Saviour's Body and Blood on the Altar in this service. 1 Cor. xi. 27.

"4. The Mass; either because of the words with which the people are in some countries *sent* away at the end of the service, or because It is the Christian *Sacrifice*. This word is in such names as Christmas, Candlemas, and Lammas. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

"5. The Lord's Supper; because in It we *eat* the Flesh of Christ, and *drink* His Blood."

The third, sixth, and seventh names are the Eucharist, the Holy Communion, and the Liturgy.

Mr. Pollock states "There is one great doctrine of this Sacrament which is taught us more or less by all the seven names. That doctrine is the truth of the Real Presence of the Lord Jesus in the Sacrament. . . . Even the devil believed that Jesus could turn stones into bread; and Christian people

cannot doubt that He can give His Body under the form of bread. Jesus, Who changed water into wine, can give His Blood under the form of wine. We must not wait for our eyes to tell us that Jesus is present; for 'we walk by faith, not by sight.' And if we ask how we are to walk by faith in this case, we learn from S. Paul that 'faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' It is no matter what we see: we are to believe what we hear; and Jesus, the Word of God, says of the bread and wine—THIS IS MY BODY—THIS IS MY BLOOD."

In addition to supplying this information on the subject of the "Holy Communion," Mr. Pollock has prepared a "Companion to the Altar," which consists of prayers and devout ejaculations, suitable, as he thinks, to be used by those who are present at the service. Before the consecration of the bread and wine, the following prayer is suggested as appropriate:—"Most Merciful God, look graciously upon the gifts now lying before Thee, and send down Thy Holy Spirit upon this Sacrifice; that He may make this bread the Body of Thy Christ, and this cup the Blood of Thy Christ." Then, after the consecration, (the miracle having been wrought) Mr. Pollock proposes the following utterances and prayers:—"It is the Lord! Lord I believe, help Thou mine unbelief. Lord Jesus! have mercy upon

me. Hail Saving Victim, offered for me and all mankind on the Cross! Hail Precious Blood flowing from the side of my Lord Jesus Christ, and washing away the stains of all sins, new and old! Cleanse, sanctify, and keep my soul unto everlasting life. Amen."

Books of devotion inculcating High Church doctrine are not scarce. Considerable time might be spent in showing by means of extracts from these books, the common agreement of the party with such views as are expressed in the Plain Guide. A few sentences, however, must suffice. In a private manual of devotion which bears the title of "The Little Prayer Book: intended chiefly for beginners in devotion: revised and corrected by Three Priests," the following words occur:—"When the priest offers the bread and wine on the altar, you may pray thus, Receive, O Eternal Father, this offering which is now only bread and wine, but will soon by a miracle of Thy grace become the True Body and Blood of Thine only Son; and with this oblation I desire to offer my most unworthy prayers, that through the merits of Jesus Christ I may obtain all the grace I need." Again, the same book contains among its directions, this:—"At the words 'This is Body, this is My Blood,' you must believe that the *bread and wine* become the real Body and Blood,

with the Soul and Godhead of Jesus Christ; bow down your heart and body in deepest adoration when the Priest says these awful words, and worship your Saviour, then verily, and indeed, present on His altar."

The above are among the directions for those who do not communicate, and there are similar directions for those who do, only one sentence of which, however, I shall quote, in which the communicant is told what to do after having received what we are in the habit of terming the "elements:"—"When you get back to your place use no words of prayer for a minute or two, but kneel with closed eyes, clasped hands, and bended head, with all your mind fixed on the thought that God and Man is within your soul and body."

Such manuals as the Plain Guide, and the Little Prayer Book, furnish the clearest possible idea of the creed of the Ritualists; and although these manuals do not supersede the Book of Common Prayer, and, of course, are not invested with its authority, they show the sense in which High Churchmen interpret the Prayer Book, and, from the specimens of their teaching that have just been given, they exhibit, so far as relates to the doctrine concerning the Lord's Table, an almost perfect accordance with the doctrine held by the Church

of Rome. The Real Presence means, in both cases, the presence of the real body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament; and although it is sometimes affirmed, that, while the Romanists believe in transubstantiation, the Ritualists believe in consubstantiation, some of these books of private devotion and instruction appear distinctly to teach the doctrine of transubstantiation; for they declare, not that the body and blood of Christ are present along with the bread and wine, but that, by a miracle, the one is converted into the other. Thus, I have already quoted words from the Little Prayer Book, in which a change of this kind is affirmed, and the same book suggests, "before the Consecration of the Sacrament," the identical prayer which is recommended in the Plain Guide, and in which God is asked to send down His Holy Spirit, "*that He may make this bread and this wine the Body and Blood of Thy Christ.*" But even though, by some of those refinements upon words and phrases in which theologians of this school have attained such proficiency that, as Dr. Mellor says, "hair-splitting has become comparatively a coarse operation," it should be made to appear that the High Church theory, as stated in the passages last quoted, is not transubstantiation but consubstantiation, the main point is not wherein Romanists and Ritualists

differ, but wherein they agree; and this is certain, that, whether in the form of a miraculous change of substance, or in the form of a miraculous association with substances that remain, the real bodily presence of Christ in the Eucharist is held and avowed by both. In No. 9 of Tracts on Church Principles, the "doctrine of the Holy Eucharist" is thus represented:—"In this Holy Sacrament, therefore, we are made partakers of the Body and of the Blood of Christ in a heavenly Mystery. Our Lord Jesus Christ not only gave His Body to be sacrificed on the cross for us, and shed His most precious Blood, but here, in this Sacrament, He causes His Body and Blood to be present *in order to our participation therein*. We here *take and receive*, verily and indeed, the Body and Blood of the Incarnate Son of God."

I must now state some of the reasons why we reject this doctrine of a bodily presence of Christ in the Sacrament as a dangerous and foolish error. Those who have read any High Church statements of doctrine, must have noticed that the literal interpretation of the words which Jesus used when He instituted the Lord's Supper, is regarded as absolutely necessary, and as settling at once, and beyond all rational objection, the nature of the ordinance. "When our Lord says, 'This is My Body,' who of us shall venture to say, This is not His Body? When

our Lord says, 'This is my Blood,' who of us shall presume to say, This is not His Blood?" In this fashion do High Churchmen argue; and it seems very convincing to those who only consider the fact that to contradict Jesus Christ is presumptuous sin. But the real point at issue is whether Christ's meaning has been correctly apprehended by those who adopt the literal, or by those who adopt the figurative, interpretation of His words. He could not contradict Himself; yet He must have done so on the theory of a real bodily presence. We, who are charged with contradicting our Lord when we declare that His body and blood are not in the Sacrament, say that those who bring this charge against us are open to the charge of representing Jesus to have contradicted Himself; for unless He had two bodies, one of which gave away the other, how could He, sitting at the table in the presence of His disciples, be eaten by them, and after, as well as before and during, the process continue sitting at that same table with a nature and appearance exactly like their own? Now no one claims for Jesus two bodies, and, therefore, the body which the disciples saw before them would have been a living contradiction of the statement that He was present bodily in the bread and wine, or in these forms; *and our Lord never intended any such absurdity*

when He said, taking first the bread into His hands, and then the wine, "This is My body—This is My blood."

We find in the New Testament four accounts, by different writers, of the institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. These accounts appear in the first three gospels, and in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, and although there are slight variations in the language attributed to our Lord, the passages are in strictest harmony with one another, and whatever doctrine is taught by any one of them is taught by all. The passages are so nearly alike, that any difficulty there may seem to be in the words of Christ as given by one writer, cannot be cleared away by simply referring to His words as recorded by another writer; but, of course, it follows from this that to have explained one passage is to have explained all. In each of the four narratives, our Lord is represented to have said, as He broke and handed bread to His disciples, "This is My body;" in two of the narratives He is represented to have used the words, as he handed to them the cup, "This is My blood;" and in the other two His words are said to have been, "This cup is the new testament (or covenant) in My blood." Now, any explanation of the precise terms in which Christ instituted the ordinance ought, of course, to be consistent with

the design which He had in appointing such an ordinance. What was that design? Nothing can be clearer than our Lord's statement of it, "Do this in remembrance of Me." In a few hours, that sacrificial death to which He had been looking forward all His life would take place; and as He sat with His disciples at the national commemorative feast of the Jews, He, of whom an apostle has written, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," instituted a new feast to commemorate a far greater redemption than the deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The analogy between the old ordinance and the new is evident from the circumstances in which the new was appointed. Any one who knows, as all may know who will take the trouble to read the twelfth chapter of the Book of Exodus, that the Passover was a feast of commemoration, of special divine appointment immediately before the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, and the passing over by the Angel of Death of the houses of the Israelites, which houses were sprinkled on the upper door-post and the two side-posts with the blood of the paschal lamb, can perceive that the commemoration by Jesus and His disciples of that national deliverance, shortly before He suffered, suggested and passed into that feast which has relation to a higher and more important deliverance by means of Christ's own blood,

and that if the main purpose of the one ordinance was commemorative, so must also be the main purpose of the other. The Lord's Supper is, therefore, not a Sacrifice but a memorial of a Sacrifice. High Churchmen declare it to be both. They do not deny that it is a memorial; but while they say "We approach the Father with the Memorial of the Sacrifice of His well-beloved Son," they also say, "We offer before the Majesty on high the tremendous Sacrifice of the Cross."

There are other aspects under which the Lord's Supper may be viewed, in addition to the one that regards it as a Commemorative Institution; such as that aspect which is suggested by the words, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till He come:" but no aspect in which we find any scriptural warrant for viewing this Institution requires, or is consistent with, the interpretation in their bare literal sense of the words, "This is My body—This is My blood." How can there be any necessity for excluding the belief that Jesus constituted the bread and wine emblems of His body and blood, when we know that He continually employed figurative modes of expression, and even did so when describing Himself, as in the sayings, "I am the Door;" "I am the Vine;" "I am the Good Shepherd?" The parabolic mode of speaking was

habitual with our Lord, and we might as reasonably put a literal interpretation upon all those expressions of His which common sense teaches us were figures of speech, as upon those words spoken at the institution of the Eucharist, on the right explanation of which so much depends. We should be landed in no greater absurdity if we explained literally every recorded word, and phrase, and sentence, uttered by Jesus Christ on earth, than the absurdity into which those persons are led who think they must interpret in this manner the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper. There is no ground for the opinion that if our Lord's words were figurative, they would mislead His disciples, who would understand them literally; for the disciples were as familiar with figurative language as we are, —perhaps more so—and the natural construction to put on their Master's words on this occasion would be the figurative, because a literal meaning would be contradicted by their senses. When Joseph said, "the three baskets are three days," and, again, "the seven good ears are seven years," would any person that heard him imagine he meant that the same objects were both baskets and days, or that ears of corn were literally spaces of time called years? Was any one ever sufficiently stupid to *think that* when the Apostle Peter wrote concerning

certain wicked persons, "these are wells without water," he meant actual wells; or that the statement in the first chapter of the Book of Revelation, "the seven candlesticks are the seven churches," identifies the candlesticks with the churches, so that when John saw a candlestick he saw a church? These questions suggest their own answers; but the symbolical use of words is not more likely to yield the true explanation in those cases, than in the case of Him who while in the body declared, as He took bread and gave it to His disciples, "This is My body," and again as He gave the cup said, "This is My blood." If we are to interpret literally in the one case, we ought to interpret literally in all the others; if the symbolical meaning satisfies the requirements of any of the cases, it will satisfy the requirements of all.

I am reminded by the mention of the cup that if the literal interpretation of the words of institution is to be pressed, consistency demands that the statement, "This is My blood," should be explained with reference to the cup itself; for how can persons who refuse to explain figuratively the expression, "This is My body," presume to say that the cup is figurative, and denotes its contents? *We* might say so; but *they* have no right to acknowledge any figure of speech, in contending for literality in the interpreta-

tion of our Lord's words. They ought to discover the application of the word "this" in the phrase, "This is my blood," by reference to the action of Jesus at the time. A cup was in His hand, and to that cup, and nothing but that cup, the sticklers for literal interpretation ought to consider the words "This is My blood" to relate. St. Luke's account of the institution of the Supper makes it appear that Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood shed for you;" and St. Paul states that Jesus "took the cup when He had supped, saying, "This cup is the new testament (or covenant) in My blood." Now we have the advantage in our view of the Lord's Supper of feeling that if we have the sense of what Jesus said, the identical words are of little consequence; but how are those who believe either in transubstantiation or consubstantiation to harmonize the accounts of Matthew and Mark with those of Luke and Paul, and to show that a cup, or even its contents, could be at the same time Christ's blood and a new covenant? The literal interpretation is twofold and self-contradictory, but the emblematical sense of our Lord's words harmonizes all that is said by different New Testament writers on the subject.

A fact, which, by itself, is fatal to the doctrine of the Real Presence as held by Roman Catholics and the High Church party in the Church of England,

is that both the bread and the wine are mentioned in the New Testament as bread and wine—nothing else and nothing more—even after consecration. The Apostle Paul, who states that he received of the Lord his knowledge concerning the Lord's Supper, says, after having given our Lord's words, which, on the theory we are now combating, were spoken subsequently to the miraculous change produced by consecration, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." It was, therefore, bread not only before but also after that which Romanists and Ritualists call the act of consecration; but it is inconceivable that if consecration had wrought the mysterious change which it is said to have done, the act of partaking should have been described as "eating this bread" and "drinking this cup," instead of eating the body and drinking the blood of Christ. If the body and blood of our Lord were taken,—whether by a mysterious change of the substances that were on the table to begin with, or by an equally mysterious incorporation with those substances,—this would have been the main thought in the apostle's mind; this would have appeared in his description of showing the Lord's death, instead of describing it as eating bread and drinking wine; this in its dread solemnity and sacredness would have been impressed upon the

consciences of those to whom the apostle wrote, instead of being omitted, and, by such omission, implicitly denied.

As the apostle describes the sacramental elements as "this bread" and "this cup," after the words of consecration have been uttered; so Jesus, after He had said "This is My blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins," added, "But I say unto you I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." So then it was still the fruit of the vine after He had termed it His blood; and the word "this," which plays a most important part in Romish and High Church argumentation concerning the phrases "this is My body" and "this is My blood," shows that He denoted the same object under the appellation "fruit of the vine" which he denoted by the expression "My blood," and that whatever the wine was before consecration it continued to be after,—the act of consecration not having made the slightest difference in the things used in order to commemorate our Lord's death.

Now as to this act of consecration, which produces the miraculous effect that is called the Real Presence, it is a complete fiction so far as the meaning attributed to it by the Ritualists is concerned. The scriptural account of it is that Jesus, before distri-

buting the bread and the wine to His disciples, blessed, or gave thanks. Matthew and Mark use the expression "blessed;" Luke and Paul the expression "gave thanks." These expressions are interchangeable, and all that is denoted is that Jesus offered a prayer of thanksgiving to God, first, before He gave the bread, and, again, before He gave the cup, to those who were seated with Him at the table. Neither Matthew nor Mark says that Jesus blessed the bread, only that He "blessed;" and it is worthy of notice that, as if to explain what this blessing was, they both say that when He took the cup He gave thanks. He blessed His Father in heaven, not the bread; for if He had blessed the bread He would surely have blessed the cup also; yet it is not said by any of the inspired writers that when He took the cup He blessed, but that He gave thanks,—a change of phraseology which makes it evident that the blessing was simply a thanksgiving. The proof which is afforded by the scriptural narratives themselves, that the expressions "blessed" and "gave thanks" are used interchangeably, is strengthened by the accounts of Matthew and John, respectively, of the miracle of feeding five thousand men, beside women and children, with five loaves and two fishes; for the former evangelist tells that Jesus "took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven

He *blessed*," and the latter says that Jesus "took the loaves, and when He had *given thanks*, He distributed to the disciples." If Jesus consecrated the sacramental elements, it was in no other sense than that in which He consecrated the loaves and fishes; yet this simple act of thanksgiving has been transformed into a service by means of which a miracle was wrought, and which, when repeated by a properly qualified "priest," still results in a miracle; that miracle being the bodily presence of our Lord and Saviour in the Eucharist.

A person who sets himself to read what has been written for and against the doctrine of the Real Presence, finds that the subject appears inexhaustible. No matter how many arguments in its favour have been overthrown, others present themselves; but a vast number of the arguments used by Romish theologians, and those whose theology is only a different shade of the same colour, are not worth reply; consisting as they do of puerilities and prejudices, that only serve to show to what shifts people can be driven in the attempt to support a rotten creed, and how singularly twisted the human mind can become by strong belief and persistent defence of that which is logically unsound. I say this in all seriousness and sincerity, and not unmindful of the profound scholarship and splendid genius of some

who have held dearer than life a doctrine, which, fairly tested by Scripture, is discovered to be utterly false. Much of the reasoning that has been employed in defence of Transubstantiation could not possibly have been, anywhere and at any time, the sober reasoning of unwarped minds. The assertion, for example, that, "Do this in remembrance of Me," means "Sacrifice this in remembrance of Me;" the attempt to establish the theory of consecration by a gratuitous and unwarrantable distinction between two words which are shown, by the scriptural narratives in which they occur, to be used interchangeably, and to represent the one as denoting the blessing in its material influence on the bread and wine, and the other as denoting the blessing in its heavenward aspect as directed towards God; the extraordinary expedients that have been used to reconcile the bodily presence of Christ in heaven with the bodily presence of Christ on earth at the same time; the unintelligible distinctions, and incoherent disquisitions, about the words "really," "truly," "substantially," &c., which have been introduced into the controversy; the convenient and easy assumption that a doctrine, which not only cannot be proved, but which is contradicted by the senses, is a mystery and a miracle, although neither of these words is ever applied in the New Testament to the

doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper, nor is any hint given that the ordinance is incapable of being understood; these and other facts and circumstances show, that much of what is said in defence of the doctrine of the Real Presence is sheer trifling, however earnestly believed. Dr. Mellor says, "There is not one word that figures in this controversy which can be said to have a definite and uniform significance; not 'substance,' not 'body,' not 'flesh,' not 'blood,' not 'presence,' not 'real,' not 'true,' not 'identical,' not 'here,' not 'there.' These terms cross the stage, and as they cross, change their forms and features in the most perplexing and baffling manner." Again, he says, referring back to what I have just quoted, "but these (liberties with words) are trifling, compared with the manipulation to which the word 'body' has been subjected, under which its meanings have varied from finite to infinite, and from material to spiritual, until the very nature of body has disappeared in its contradictory definitions."

Having dealt at some length with the scriptural narratives of the institution of the Lord's Supper, our time does not allow any discussion of that other passage which is supposed to favour the Romish and Ritualistic view of this Sacrament,—I mean the sixth chapter of the gospel of St. John. It may be stated, however, that the words "Except ye eat the flesh of

the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," &c., could have no reference to the Lord's Supper, because it had not been instituted at the time Jesus spoke these words; and that the context plainly shows that the eating and drinking of the flesh and blood of Christ of which He spoke on this occasion, and of which, owing to the feelings and conduct of the multitude that surrounded Him, He found it necessary to speak, were synonymous with believing on Him. His own subsequent saying, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life," interpret His former statement, and explain that an actual eating and drinking of His flesh and blood was not intended, but that under that figure of speech He referred to a spiritual act, and taught a spiritual doctrine.

This is not the time to explain in detail our own views concerning the Lord's Table. In combating the High Church doctrine, that which we regard as the teaching of Christ and His apostles on the subject has been announced with sufficient fulness and explicitness to enable any persons present to understand, not only what we would wish them to reject, but also what we would wish them to believe. The substance of what I have said, is that a real objective presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the

Lord's Supper is untenable on those scriptural grounds which constitute the sole foundation on which to build our creed. But although He is not *in* the Supper, so as to be received as flesh and blood into our own bodies, He is *at* the Supper, "as a Host with His guests;" and those who devoutly commemorate in this ordinance His sacrifice upon the cross, may be conscious of a spiritual and real presence of Christ, which brings strength and joy into their souls. Why should we meddle, then, it may be asked, with the opinions of those who think differently from ourselves, and who imagine that their observance of the Eucharist is a literal participation of the body and blood of Christ? Dr. Pusey says, in his *Eirenicon*, "Presbyterians have what *they* believe; we what *we* believe. But they who have observed pious Presbyterians and pious English Catholics, have discerned among our people a spiritual life of a kind which was not among theirs; in a word, a sacramental life." The value of this testimony of observers depends entirely upon who and what these observers were. If they were, as is most probable, "pious English Catholics," it is easy to account for what they saw, and where they saw it. But since Dr. Pusey allows that Presbyterians have what they believe, why should we not be satisfied, and allow High Churchmen

the undisturbed possession of what *they* believe? Simply because we cannot say as much for them as he says for us. We do not think that they have what they believe; and we do think that their opinions are unscriptural, and that they mislead the minds and injure the souls of men. When Dr. Pusey says we Presbyterians have what we believe, he does not think that such belief as ours rests on much, and that for us, therefore, there is much to have. Possibly he is as far astray in this opinion as in some others; we may have more than he suspects. But however sincerely and devoutly that system of doctrine may be held to which his name has given one of the modern designations, Presbyterians unite with other evangelical Christians, both within and without the Church of England, in protesting against the idea of a sacramental salvation; in denying the power of "priests" to present upon an earthly altar the sacrifice of the body and blood of the Redeemer, whose glorified body is in heaven, and whom the heaven has received until the times of restitution of all things; in condemning the superstitious importance attached to the elements of the Eucharist, and the posturing and muttering, and aspect of mysteriousness, and pretence of miracle-working, with which the "Sacrament of the Altar," as they term it, is observed; in repudiating

those claims on behalf of a sacrificing priesthood, falsely so called, which imply that there is, and can be, no true observance of the great Christian Rite except where they preside; in warning against the inevitable tendency of High Church doctrines and practices to create illusion as to our personal spiritual state, and our relation to God, who has never said that the Sacraments, although of His own appointment, are essential to salvation, but who has said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." I close by asking you to hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus; to rest your hope of acceptance with God on that work of Christ which can never be repeated; and which He pleads in heaven, where, in His glorified humanity, He sits at the right hand of God, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. I ask you to have nothing to do with a form of worship to which many are attracted by the music, and the vestments, and much besides which appeals to the senses, but which is associated with a doctrine that the senses themselves testify is false. I ask you to study the Bible, and to entreat God to give you the Spirit of truth, who, when given, will guide you into all truth, and

will preserve you from such guidance as leads astray, though proffered by those who consider themselves to be, in a special manner, the commissioned and qualified servants of God. And if there are any here who have not trusted in the Saviour yet, I ask them to delay no longer, but to lay their sins on Jesus even now. Let them lose no time—enough has been lost already—but let them look to Christ and live. O take the blessings of the Gospel while they are offered ; you know not when they may be withdrawn.

IV.

THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION.

THESE two matters are so intimately related to each other, that to consider them aright requires that they should be considered together. The one act is the complement of the other; confession to a priest being made with a view to receiving absolution, and absolution being given by a priest only after having heard confession. On the subject of going to confession Mr. Pollock says: "Many people in these days wish very much to go to Confession, and to receive Absolution, but they cannot quite make up their minds to do so. Two things, for the most part, keep them back. They don't like Confession, and they don't know the value of Absolution." These words I have quoted simply in order to exhibit High Church testimony to the essential relation between the two acts of confessing and being absolved; and now I will state the High Church

theory of absolution in the following clear and unmistakeable language from the Plain Guide :—
“ Good advice is all very well in its place, but it is not medicine. When people only fancy themselves ill, it may be enough for the doctor to go and cheer them up, speaking comfortable words, and telling them that they are not so bad as they thought, but that by taking care of themselves they will soon be quite well again. Or when people are only delicate and weak, it may be enough, even in this case, for a doctor to give them good advice as to food, exercise, and such things, telling them how to guard against diseases that threaten. But when people are really ill, and in danger, the doctor perhaps does not talk so much, but he does far more. He knows that good advice won't cure his patient, so he applies the proper remedies. Just so it is with your soul and its disease. If you only fancied yourself a sinner, or were only in danger of falling into sin for the first time, it might do for the clergyman to give you good advice; showing you how to take comfort and rejoice in God's love to you. But sin, you know, is not a mere fancy; it is a very dreadful and a very real thing. So the physician of the soul does more than comfort you. He points you to the fountain open for sin, and tells you of the precious Blood

of Jesus. He urges you to come to Jesus and wash away all your stains. He tells you also of a way by which you may have that Blood applied to your soul. As you were washed from your sins at Holy Baptism, you may be washed again by the Absolution spoken to you in God's Name by His Priest."

Now, with the greater portion of the above statement all of us, I am sure, will cordially agree. We find a true representation concerning sin,—that it is a spiritual disease, "a very dreadful and a very real thing;" we find a true representation concerning the means of cure for that spiritual disease—the "fountain open for sin," the "precious blood of Jesus;" but we find, at the close of the paragraph, an incorrect representation of the process of applying the cure, for it is said to be "by the Absolution spoken in God's Name by His Priest," whereas the teaching of the New Testament is that no one stands between a sinner and the application (I do not say the offer) to him of pardon, or any other spiritual benefit, except the Lord Himself; that is, the Lord alone by His Spirit, and not through any human channel, dispenses forgiveness to the penitent. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." When Mr. Pollock illustrates the nature of sin by likening it to bodily disease,

he compares the function of the clergyman with that of the doctor, and his theory is that what the one does for the body the other can do for the soul. But he really claims more power for the clergyman in relation to spiritual disease than the doctor has over the ailments of the body; because while no medical man, even although "he applies the proper remedies," is infallible, and therefore able to cure every case of sickness, the "physician of the soul," as Mr. Pollock terms the clergyman, must be supposed to be infallible in his dealing with the malady of sin, if he is supposed to exercise a power of absolution which he has received from God. True, Mr. Pollock has written, "No man can forgive you your sins. Never forget this. The Priest only acts for God, as he does in Holy Baptism when sin is first washed away. And it would be a great sin for the Priest to absolve you if God had not told him to do this. Jesus Christ is the One High Priest." But still, the High Church theory of absolution is not that a priest merely declares something which it is believed God has done; or that, having obtained evidence of sin having been truly repented of and forsaken, he simply assures the penitent and altered person that God has forgiven him, the condition having been fulfilled on which forgiveness is promised. It would not be exclusively a priestly

function to absolve if that were absolution; and although Mr. Pollock occasionally uses expressions which appear to reduce absolution to a declaration, such as any one might make who had sufficient grounds for making it in his knowledge of a fellow-creature's sincerity and of God's willingness to pardon, he also employs phraseology which depicts absolution as a divinely-conferred power possessed by priests only, and amounting to an actual remission of sin. He may say, very modestly, "God's Priest is a sinner like yourself;" "The clergy go to confession as well as the laity;" "Priests sometimes make mistakes;" "No man can forgive you your sins;" but he maintains that, "as sin is once washed away at Holy Baptism, so it is washed away again by the Absolution spoken in God's name by His Priest," and he speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ having given to His priests the *power* of absolution, and what that power is, the application which is made of such scriptural passages as these will show: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you:" "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Dr. Pusey is very clear in his own mind about the scriptural basis of judicial absolution, and there

is no greater High Church authority than he. "If any one," he says, "wishes to know what is our belief in regard to the power left by our Lord Jesus Christ to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, we do receive those words in their plain, literal sense. We believe that our Lord, when He said to His apostles after His resurrection, 'Whose sins ye do remit, they are remitted unto them,' meant to convey a permanent power to them and their successors, in the same way as when He said, 'Go and baptize all nations,' He gave to them, and to those after them, the power to baptize in the name of the Holy Trinity. As baptism was not limited to the apostles, so neither was absolution."

Whether the High Church doctrine concerning absolution finds any real sanction in the words which our Lord addressed to His apostles, and which are pleaded on its behalf, we shall presently consider; but since the first step towards receiving absolution is to acknowledge and enumerate one's sins to a "priest," let us see what the Scriptures have to say for or against auricular confession. High Church theologians have pressed into their service almost every passage in the Bible which contains the word "confess," or any inflection or variety of that word, or any word or phrase of kindred mean-

ing. Thus in order to prove that "auricular confession was ordered by God when He instituted the Law, and it was practised by the chosen people to the time of Christ's coming," the passage (Num. v. 5-7) is adduced, "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the Lord, and that person be guilty, then shall they confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed." I venture to say that no human being who had not previously adopted the doctrine of auricular confession, and was in search of something by which to support it, would ever have imagined that these words from the Book of Numbers taught anything bearing the slightest resemblance to it. True, we find it stated that those who have committed a trespass "shall confess their sin," but it is not said that the confession is to be made to a priest, nor that it is to be made in private; and it would be as reasonable to take any passage of Scripture which exhibits the duty of prayer, and view it as a scriptural warrant for offering petitions to the Virgin Mary, as it is to found an argument for auricular confession on the

words now quoted, or see in them an example of confession of that kind. The latter part of the extract shows that the trespass specially contemplated, although against the Lord, was also against a fellow-creature, and was in its nature some misappropriation of property which was to be confessed to the person who had been wronged, as well as to the Lord, and was to be indemnified according to a rule given. Imagine this being brought forward to show the existence of auricular confession under the Mosaic dispensation, and to support the practice now !

Another instance drawn from the Old Testament is the confession which David made to Nathan in the words, "I have sinned against the Lord." Because David made this acknowledgment to a prophet whom the Lord had sent to him in order that he might be made to realise the evil he had done "in the matter of Uriah the Hittite," and because Nathan said to David, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin," auricular confession and priestly absolution are supposed to be exemplified and supported by the case. It is a sufficient answer to the plea which is thus based to say that Nathan was not a priest, but a prophet, and that prophets and priests were two different orders of men ; notwithstanding that the writer of No. 1 Tract of "Tracts for the Day,"

uses the words priest and prophet indiscriminately, (though evidently from sheer confusion of thought) in referring to Nathan as father-confessor to David. He says, "The Protestant seems to believe that when such an expression occurs in Scripture as 'I will acknowledge my sin unto Thee, and mine unrighteousness have I not hid : I said I will confess my sins unto the Lord,' it proves that confession to a priest is not required by God, forgetting that David, who used those words, actually made that confession through Nathan." But in pointing out what seems to him the forgetfulness of "Protestants," he himself forgets that Nathan was not a priest, and that to cite him is to call as a witness one who can give no evidence. If he had remembered that the words priest and prophet do not denote the same office, and must not be used interchangeably, and also that the prophet Nathan was sent to David by the Lord to convict him of his offence, instead of David voluntarily going to Nathan to make confession, and through him obtain forgiveness—which alone would answer to the practice of auricular confession—the writer would scarcely have ventured to summon David and Nathan to support his views.

The case of Achan is also adduced ; although it is difficult to see how a man who was found out by

means of a public inquiry, and who confessed, not to a priest, but to Joshua the leader of the Israelites, and who knew that when his confession was made the whole nation would be informed of it, and whose confession was followed not by absolution but by stoning to death, can with any appearance of propriety be brought forward to substantiate the existence among the Israelites of the practice of auricular confession.

None of the other Old Testament illustrations assist the High Church theory more effectually than those which have now been noticed. They are all irrelevant; they are all about as unlike as they can be to the practice of which they are supposed to be examples; and they may all, therefore, be passed by, while we turn to the New Testament and examine the arguments which High Churchmen derive from that source.

As might be expected, there is within this field also an attempt to press into the service of Ritualism every passage that contains any allusion of any kind to confession. Let it only be discovered that any one ever confessed his sins, or was ever recommended to confess them, and the conclusion is drawn that this is an example of, or an authority for, private confession to a priest who has received power from God to absolve the penitent. The case of those who

were baptized by John in Jordan confessing their sins; the case of Judas Iscariot, who, filled with remorse, came into the temple and flung the thirty pieces of silver on the floor, saying to the chief priests and elders, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood;" the case of the converts at Ephesus, of whom it is recorded that they came and confessed, and showed their deeds, have all been regarded as giving scriptural countenance to the doctrine of auricular confession; whereas these were all public confessions, and were followed by no sacerdotal absolution, and, intelligently and honestly explained, not one of them yields the slightest encouragement to the theory and practice of confession as existing in the Church of Rome and the High Church section of the Church of England.

We have only, so far, attacked the outworks of the fortress, and have not reached the strongest defence of High Churchmen on the question of Absolution and Confession. They might give up, if they would, all those passages from both Testaments on which we have been speaking, and still preserve what they regard as the chief strength of their position. The power of absolution which they consider Jesus Christ bestowed on His apostles and their successors, necessarily involves, according to their view, the practice of auricular confession; for

absolution is not given to all sinners, but only to penitents who come to "God's Priest" to unburden themselves of the sins which are pressing on the conscience, and to "receive the benefit of Absolution." The supposed right to give absolution is grounded upon the supposed fact of apostolical succession. I have already shown that apostolical succession, in the High Church sense, is not a fact, but a fiction; still, in dealing with the subject at present before us, it is necessary to consider those words of Jesus Christ which the Ritualists pervert into a direct authority to their priests to give absolution to such persons as penitently confess before them their sins. They appeal to our Lord's address to Peter, after the apostle had answered the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" with the acknowledgment, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The power of

binding and loosing, which our Lord committed to Peter on this occasion, He afterwards committed to all the apostles when He said, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." When we reflect upon the peculiar and exceptional position which the apostles occupied in relation to the spiritual kingdom which their Master established upon earth, it does not surprise us to find Him promising that certain acts of theirs should be ratified in heaven ; but it would be surprising if men now living, who are not endowed with the power of working miracles, who have not received any special spiritual illumination, who have no divine gifts except such as any believer in Christ may have, should be justified in applying to themselves, in the sense in which some do, the words concerning binding and loosing which Jesus addressed to Peter and the rest of the apostles. The authority given to the apostles in these words is not said to include the forgiveness of sins, or the withholding of forgiveness ; so that those who claim to be the successors of the apostles may be basing on this passage a greater prerogative for themselves than it conveyed to the apostles. To the Jews, binding and loosing were not unfamiliar ideas ; and Lightfoot says, "The phrase to bind and loose, in

their vulgar speech, meant to prohibit and to permit, or to teach what is prohibited or permitted;" and he explains that Christ meant, by using this language to His disciples, to give them, over and above the ministerial function of teaching what ought and what ought not to be done, this peculiar power: "That whereas some part of Moses' law was now to stand in practice, and some to be laid aside; some things under the law prohibited were now to be permitted, and some things then permitted to be now prohibited; what they allowed in practice should stand, and what to fall should fall; what they bound on earth should be bound in heaven." There may be differences of opinion concerning the precise limits of the authority which Jesus on this occasion gave to His apostles, even among those who are agreed that it was not an authority which they could transmit to others. We can find no trace of confession and absolution in our Lord's words; but, even if we could, it would still be an impregnable position we had taken in maintaining that the functions of the apostles were incapable of transmission.

In discussing the subject of Baptismal Regeneration, we found that there was one passage of Scripture on which alone Dr. Pusey was willing to stake the whole matter, viz., the words of Jesus Christ to

Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Now there is a passage which seems to High Churchmen to settle the question of Absolution as decidedly as that other passage appears to settle the question of Baptismal Regeneration. It is our Lord's commission to His disciples, recorded in the twentieth chapter of St. John's gospel, "Whose sins soever ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whose sins soever ye retain they are retained." These words were spoken by Jesus Christ as He breathed on His disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and the power of remitting or retaining sins, whatever may have been its meaning and manifestation, was, therefore, dependent upon that Divine gift with which the commission to exercise the power was accompanied. This circumstance is fatal to the pretensions of Romish and High Church clergymen to inherit the prerogative which was bestowed upon the apostles; because, seeing what they consider that prerogative to have been, no one whom Jesus Christ does not specially qualify by imparting to him the Holy Ghost, with all the supernatural influence necessary for discerning whose sins to remit and whose to retain, can, without presumption, and even worse than presumption, arrogate to himself this apostolic privilege. In my

first lecture, I stated that there is no evidence that the apostles ever addressed to others those solemn, authoritative words which Jesus Christ had spoken to them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," &c.; and I also stated, and now repeat, that there is no evidence that when a bishop pronounces them in the Ordination Service, they are accompanied by any spiritual gift or grace, or any token, of any kind, that the Holy Ghost is imparted and received. It would be well if it were not the practice to use that formula; for, in some instances, there has been proof that those to whom the authoritative communication, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" had been spoken, lived without the signs and fruits of the Spirit; and in no instance has it ever appeared that any special spiritual blessing was conferred even upon spiritual men, by means of a fellow-mortal and fellow-sinner addressing them in those stupendous words which He who alone could bestow the Holy Ghost addressed to His apostles, and they, so far as we know, never ventured to repeat to others.

If, then, the apostles did receive power to remit and retain sins, in the sense given to our Lord's words by the High Church party, it does not follow that Romish and Anglican priests have also received that power, and that their doctrine of absolution is scripturally tenable. They must show that the

apostles transmitted to their successors the prerogatives which they had received from Jesus ; and they must prove that they themselves are descended in a direct unbroken line of priests from the apostles ; and these two things, notwithstanding all their assumption of power and privilege, they cannot do.

We should expect to find some trace of that supernatural knowledge of the human heart which the apostles possessed, if the power of remitting or retaining sins as given them by Jesus Christ was constant, so that they could exercise it upon any person with whom in the course of their life and ministry they met. But we do not find any indication that the apostles were endowed with a permanent and infallible insight into the spiritual condition of their fellow-men ; nor do we find any evidence that they were in the habit of pronouncing that judicial absolution, which, on the strength of the opinion that the power and right were conferred upon the apostles, their self-styled successors claim to be able and privileged to wield. The recorded history of the apostles does not contain a single instance of auricular confession, or of priestly absolution ; and the utmost length to which we can go, in claiming for the apostles such knowledge of the human heart as would constitute a basis for remitting and retaining sins, is that occasionally, and for

special purposes of instruction and impression, (as when Peter detected the fraud attempted to be practised by Ananias and Sapphira), they were enabled, by a Divine enlightenment, to perceive and understand things which were beyond the vision and capacity of ordinary Christians. But by far the most likely explanation of the prerogative denoted by the words, "Whose sins soever ye remit," &c., is that it referred to acts of discipline in the Apostolic Church, and that the relation of the gift of the Holy Ghost to those acts as performed by the apostles, was that the sentence pronounced by these servants of Christ did not contravene, but expressed, the will of Him whose they were and whom they served. When we think of the questions relating to the purity, and progress, and well-being of the infant Church which would be referred to the apostles for settlement; when we think of Paul who, besides those things that were without, had that which came upon him daily, the care of all the churches, and consider how much depended upon the decisions that he might give and the advice that he might tender; when we think how both the immediate welfare of Christian communities and their prospects, possibly for many years, would be bound up in those acts of receiving into membership or excluding from membership, which necessarily

were of frequent occurrence, and of that special spiritual oversight and guidance which persons would require who had been accustomed, before they embraced Christianity, to religious systems of a totally different kind; we conclude that Jesus Christ would be likely to invest the apostles with peculiar qualifications of wisdom and sound judgment, and, as a consequence, authority; and we perceive an announcement of such—authority based on such qualifications—in the words, “Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained.” Much depends upon the nature of the sins denoted; and to include in the category sins of thought, and sins of omission, and such offences against God as are known only to God and the sinner, would certainly be to ascribe to the apostles a power of remission and retention of stupendous character and magnitude; but, in the absence of any claim on their part to possess such power, and in the presence of tokens that ordinarily they acted as if no such power were possessed, we conclude that the sins denoted were rather ecclesiastical offences, than all matters without exception bearing the character of sin against God. Dr Mellor says:—“The history of the apostles and their letters combine to prove, that, whatever occasional assistance

they might receive by which they could search the spirits of men, they were, for the most part, as dependent as others on the ordinary facts and processes by which men acquire the knowledge of each other's character. At times they might be endowed with supernatural insight, but they were generally left to the uncertainties of observation and inference." I do not believe that this description of the apostles reduces the prerogative pointed out by the words, "Whose sins soever ye remit they are remitted unto them," &c., to a mere appearance or pretence of power received from Christ. Read the fifth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, and you will see with what authority Paul spoke concerning the treatment of the incestuous person who was a member of the church of Corinth: "I verily, as absent in body but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath done this deed; in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. . . . Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Does not this one example of ecclesiastical procedure afford a practical illustration both of retaining sin and re-

mitting sin?—retaining it by excommunication of the guilty person in the name of the Lord Jesus, but afterwards, on evidence of true repentance, remitting it, as we perceive by that further mention of the case in the second chapter of the second epistle: “Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” This was absolution, yet not the sacerdotal absolution of Romanists and Ritualists; nor do we find a single instance in the New Testament of an apostle privately hearing, and extracting, confession of sins in “thought, word, and deed,” and privately dispensing forgiveness to the penitent self-accuser.

If time had permitted, I might have shown how utterly futile are the appeals which High Church writers have made to various other passages of

Scripture with a view to defend confession and absolution according to the sense and mode believed and practised among themselves. But having criticised their principal argument, it is needless to explain in detail how little to the point is their reference to the exhortation given by the apostle James, "Confess your faults one to another"—a mere statement of the Christian duty of making acknowledgment to one another of those sins which whether wilfully or inadvertently, Christians too often commit, and for which they ought to seek one another's pardon; or their reference to that case of forgiveness of sin, and to the circumstances which attended it, recorded in the gospels, where we read that Jesus said to a man sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee," and that certain of the scribes said in their hearts, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" and Jesus, in order that they might know that the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins, cured the sick person, and when the multitude saw it they marvelled and glorified God who had given such power unto men,—a case which only shows that Jesus Christ could forgive sins, and not that this is, or ever was, the prerogative of any other man; for the ignorance of the multitude concerning the Divinity of Jesus,

which led them to regard the power He had exercised as some extraordinary human power, is a poor pretext on which to base the notion that sinners have received from God power to absolve sinners.

It is beyond the range of subject I have chosen, to speak of the demoralising influence of which the Confessional has been the direct and fruitful source, and of the injurious effect which must inevitably be produced upon the mental and spiritual nature of men who live under the delusion that they possess such a prerogative as that of which the Confessional is the sign, and who have grown familiar with the mockery of appearing to send persons from their presence forgiven, in consequence of having privately confessed to them their sins. Whom shall we most commiserate, the victims of error and superstition who go to confession, or the victims of error and superstition who administer absolution? Let us pity both classes, and let us pray for them too. But let us not disregard the necessity and duty of trying to arrest the mischief which the revival of High Church doctrines is working in the present day. We desire to employ no other means of counteracting these doctrines than plain and faithful exposure of their unscriptural character; exhibition of their injurious tendency; and, above all, the preaching of a gospel which recog-

nises no priesthood on earth but that of Christ's people everywhere, and no official mediation between men and God but that of our once crucified and now exalted Lord. Confession of sin is obligatory on all, and forgiveness of sin is required by all. Without one exception, mankind are sinners against God; but "it is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," even the chief. Let sinners come then—even the greatest—in penitence and faith, and confess to Him whose law they have transgressed, and accept the pardon He is willing and waiting to bestow. God makes through men the offer of forgiveness, although He never maketh through men the application of forgiveness. He commissions those who know the method of salvation to speak of it to others; to instruct them in what Jesus Christ has done; and to urge them to receive the offered and inestimable blessings of the Gospel of His grace. The Holy Spirit will accompany the faithful and prayerful preaching of the Word. When "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" are acknowledged to constitute the substance of the sacred commission, that commission, though exercised in weakness, may yet be discharged in humble hope that it will be useful to man and acceptable to God. But when fallible

and erring mortals presume to claim Divine prerogatives, God will not bless them in their attempted usurpation of that which He has never given ; and the day which shall declare every man's work will make manifest their gross presumption and sad delusion ; and thus the wood and hay and stubble of Ritualistic doctrine and observance will perish in the fire that shall try every man's work of what sort it is ; and if there has been, though mixed with grievous errors, a childlike faith in Jesus, *that* will abide and that alone. May the Lord soon purify His Church, and He shall receive the glory !

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